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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 EB-08
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0080
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 4378

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR PDIP BG KE
SUBJECT: BANGLADESH APPOINTS FIRST RESIDENT HIGH COMMISSIONER IN KENYA

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.
1. BDG ANNOUNCED JULY 12 THE APPOINTMENT OF A.N. HAMIDULLAH AS THE FIRST RESIDENT HIGH COMMISSIONER TO KENYA.

2. HAMIDULLAH WAS BORN IN DACCA DISTRICT, FEBRUARY 15, 1927. HE GRADUATED WITH A BACHELOR OF COMMERCE DEGREE FROM CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY IN 1946. AFTER THE INDEPENDENCE OF PAKISTAN HE ENTERED THE STATE BANK OF PAKISTAN (THE "RESERVE" BANK) TRAINING PROGRAM IN 1948 AND SHIFTED TO THE NATIONAL BANK OF PAKISTAN (A REGULAR BANKING OPERATION OWNED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN). DURING THIS PERIOD HE WAS SENT ABROAD FOR TRAINING AT BARCLAY'S BANK, LONDON, IN 1956, AND ON HIS RETURN IN 1958 WAS REGIONAL MANAGER OF THE NATIONAL BANK AT CHITTAGONG. HE TRANSFERRED TO THE INDUSTRIAL DEELOPMENT BANK OF PAKISTAN IN 1961 AS OFFICER-IN-CHARGE OF ITS OPERATIONS IN EAST PAKISTAN. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BANK WAS NURUL AMIN, A FORMER CHIEF MINISTER OF EAST PAKISTAN AND LATER, AFTER 1971, A VICE PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN, A MAJOR STOCKHOLDER WAS
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ZAHURUL ISLAM, HEAD OF AN IMPORTANT EAST PAKISTANI COM-MERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL GROUP. HE RETAINED THIS POST UNTIL HE WAS NAMED THE FIRST GOVERNOR OF THE BANGLADESH BANK IN JANUARY, 1972, JUST AFTER LIBERATION. HE ATTENDED IMF AND IBRD MEETINGS IN 1972 AND 1973. HAMIDULLAH WAS DISMISSED AS GOVERNOR IN NOVEMBER, 1974. SINCE THAT TIME HE HAD BEEN BASED PRIMARILY IN

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LONDON AS A CONSULTANT TO THE ISLAM GROUP, HAS MADE FREQUENT
BUSINESS TRIPS TO THE PERSIAN GULF AREA, AND HAS BUT
SELDOM VISITED DACCA.

3. HAMIDULLA'S WIFE AND SON ARE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN
KILLED BY PAKISTAN ARMY TROOPS IN MARCH 1971, DURING THE
EARLY PHASE OF THE LIBERATION WAR. HE WAS REMARRIED TO
HIS FIRST WIFE'S SISTER, ACCORDING TO REPORTS WE HAVE.
THE TWO WIVES ARE SAID TO BE COUSINS OF THE WIFE OF
INDUSTRIES MINISTER JAMALUDDIN AHMAD. END UNCLASSIFIED.

4. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING
HAMIDULLA'S DISMISSAL FROM HIS GOVERNORSHIP ARE NOT CLEAR.
HE WAS GENERALLY CREDITED WITH BEING A "HIGHLY SKILLED"
BANKER (SEE CENTRAL REFERENCE SERVICE REPORT DATED
SEPTEMBER 6, 1974), BUT SOME HAVE SUGGESTED HE SIMPLY
RAN OUT OF GAS FOLLOWING THE EVENTS OF 1971. OTHERS
HAVE SAID, AND BOTH MAY BE CORRECT, THAT HE HAD SERIOUS
POLICY DIFFERENCES WITHE SOCIALIST REGIME OF SHIEKH
MUJIBUR RAHMAN WHICH RAN CONTRARY TO HIS MORE LAISSEZ-FAIRE
VIEWS. HE LEFT BANGLADESH AFTER HIS DISMISSAL.

5. HIS SUDDEN RETURN TO BANGLADESH SERVICE PERHAPS IS DUE
PARTLY TO HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH A KEY MINISTER, JAMALUDDIN
AHMAD, AND ALSO TO THE RISE IN FAVOR RECENTLY OF THE
ISLAM GROUP. (ANOTHER ISLAM PROTEGE, ABUL AHSAN, IS NOW
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AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM.)

6. NO ONE NOW AT THIS EMBASSY KNOW HAMIDULLAH PERSONALLY.
THE BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WE HAVE DOES NOT INDICATE PER-
SONAL TRAITS OR CHARACTERISTICS.
SCHNEIDER

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